and that their very struggle nourishes our life. One must recall here the words of Christ: 'Not peace, but a sword.* That's what Christ means. We must not seek happiness in peace, but in conflict. The life of a saint is a struggle from one end to the other; the greatest saint is the one who at the end is the most vanquished.'*

He speaks during the lunch of a certain "frontal sense" that allows us, without reading them, to recognize in advance a good or a bad book, and always warned him against Auguste Comte. I should be more amused to hear him execute Bernardin if he did not at the same time demolish Rousseau. He demolishes many others! Beating about him with a monstrance, he devastates our literature.

(I remember my consternation, at Cuverville, when, pruning and cleaning out a peony plant, I noticed that a branch I had just removed because it seemed to me dead was still full of sap.)

He speaks with the greatest respect of Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad, and with the greatest scorn of English writers in general "who have never learned that the rule of "nothing unessential* is the first condition of art.**

He talks a great deal; you are aware of the pressure of Ideas and images within him. As, apropos of I don't remember what or whom, I spoke of the weakening of the memory: "Memory doesn't weaken/* he immediately exclaimed. "None of man's faculties weakens with age. That is a gross error. All man's faculties develop continuously from birth to death/*

He talks endlessly; someone else's thought does not stop his for an instant; even a cannon could not divert him. In talking with him, in trying to talk with him, one is forced to interrupt him. He waits politely until you have finished your sentence, then resumes where he had stopped, at the very word, as if you had said no-thing.

He shocked Francis Jammes some time ago (in 1900) when he replied to Jammes's anguish with *I have my God/*

(The greatest advantage of religious faith for the artist is that it permits him a *limitless* pride.)

Upon leaving me he gives me the address of his confessor.

He also said:

"I attach absolutely no value to the literary quality of my work. Frizeau was the first one who, brought back to God by my dramas because he saw religion dominating everything in them, made me think: then I haven't written in vain. The literary beauty of my work has no other significance for me than that found by a workman who is aware of having performed his task well; I simply did my best; but, had I been a carpenter, I should have been just as conscientious in planing a plank properly as I have been in writing properly.**